

Ruby Says He Shot Because Oswald 'Wiped Out Everything I Lived For'

Fourth in a Series

By Jack Ruby

With William Read Woodfield

In this article, Ruby describes the 24 hours before he shot down Lee Oswald.

DALLAS—About 11:30 a.m.—I got up, washed, dressed and went to "the wreaths." (The spot in Dallas where President John F. Kennedy was shot was marked with flowers and wreaths by Dallasites).

I saw Officer Chaney (a Dallas policeman with whom Ruby was friendly) on the curb and asked him to show me the window the shots were fired from. He did and I looked up and felt sick.

At the wreaths, I said, "We grieve for you." I looked at each wreath and read what they said. It was too sad. "We grieve for you, Mr. President," I said to him.

About 1:15 p.m., I went to Sol's Turf Bar and a lot of guys are talking about the Weissman ad (an anti-Kennedy ad in the Dallas News). They're screaming mad. I said, "Look what I've got. Three pictures. 'Impeach Earl Warren.'" (The day before, Ruby had taken pictures of a poster with these words on it.)

Calls Lawyer on Picture

About 2:30 p.m., I called lawyer Stanley Kauffman and told him I had this picture and thought he should do something.

"What?" he said. I didn't know what. I went back to the guys and made a speech about Dallas being a good town. I let off steam. Then I left.

After 2 p.m., I watched TV of the President's coffin being moved from the White House and drank juice—glass after glass of juice—and I was glass of juice—and I was dried out from crying.

About 8 p.m., I went home and made dinner. I watched the mourners pass by the President's coffin—thousands of them—thousands of grieving Americans.

About 10 p.m., I went to the Carousel and called Ev (his sister). I heard the TV on in the background. I asked her

what was happening. She said, "Sadness is all. They're moving that creep to the jail in the morning . . . at 10."

Sunday, Nov. 24, about 1 a.m., I had no occasion for any gaiety. I was in mourning. I went to bed.

Took Diet Pills

About 9:30 a.m., I was up early. I was sad. I took my diet pills and a cold prescription.

The diet pills help me with my diet but they aggravate me. They make my problems worse and I had doubled my dosage four or five days before.

When I take a drink with them, I get nasty, mean and conceited. My friends don't know me. I don't care about the business. I just want to have a ball. This morning I also took CRD tablets.

I was watching TV. Rabbi Seligson in New York was eulogizing the President. I became very emotional. He really brought this thing home to me.

About 10 a.m., Linn (Karen Linn Bennett, an entertainer at Ruby's club), called, asking for \$25 to pay her rent. I told her I'd be going downtown and would send the money to her in care of Western Union in Fort Worth.

About 10:15 a.m., I put my money in one pocket and my pistol in my right trouser pocket. I got in my car and pulled out.

About 11 a.m., I went down Main Street and I saw TV and all kinds of people in front of the County Jail. I knew that Oswald was going to be moved at 10. I glanced at a clock. It was a couple of minutes past 11. I assumed that he had already been moved to the County Building from the City Jail. I continued on up to the Western Union office and as I passed the City Jail I saw people there, too.

I could see people down the ramp in the basement. I got out of the car, left Sheba (his dachshund) and went into the Western Union office. I waited my turn and sent Linn \$25. The clerk stamped the message while I was still in the

telegraph office. The time stamp says 11:17 a.m.

Then I walked out of the telegraph office and started back toward my car. I passed the ramp to the basement of the City Hall. An officer was directing cars out of the basement and I walked down the ramp just as a car driven by Sam Pearce—an officer I've known for years—came up the ramp at full speed. I just took my normal stride and walked down the ramp.

Sought Closer View

At 11:19 a.m. I reached the bottom of the ramp. I didn't see anyone I knew. I put my hands into my pocket to be comfortable and walked to get a closer view of whatever was going to happen. Suddenly there was a great commotion.

Out of there walked Oswald. He was about 10 feet from me. He came out all of a sudden with a smirky, defiant, cursing, vicious Communist expression on his face.

I can't convey what impressions he gave me. I lost my senses. There was no one standing by me. Suddenly this person pops out.

I must have pulled my gun and took a couple of steps. They (the police) could have blown my head off. I must have been crazy. I only shot him once.

I had no thought of doing any violence to anyone when I went down there. I didn't even think about it. This man had wiped out everything I loved and lived for.

I remember being down on the floor and I said, "You don't have to beat my brains out. I'm Jack Ruby. What am I doing here? What are you guys all jumping on me for? Why am I here? I'm Jack Ruby. I'm not somebody that's wanted."

11:21 a.m., they dragged me into the elevator. They brought me upstairs. They told me I had shot Oswald. That was the first time I realized what I had done. I said, "My God. My God!"

SATURDAY: Questions and Answers.

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